

Local Authority Energy Company Obligation Flexible Eligibility Statement of Intent

Slough Borough Council

1. Name of the local authority: Slough Borough Council
2. Date of publication 3rd January 2018 (version 1)
3. Published at : Slough Borough Council's Website

1. INTRODUCTION

This Statement of Intent (SOI) sets out how households in Slough Borough will be declared to be eligible for ECO - Help to Heat funding, in accordance with guidelines from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). This scheme is part of the government's Affordable Warmth Programme.

The ECO - Help to Heat funding scheme aims to direct an increased proportion of funding to low income households (not just those in receipt of specific benefits) and/or people with specific health conditions. Either of these situations can make people more vulnerable to the effects of a cold home.

Public Health England Review states:¹.

- *Cold homes can affect or exacerbate a range of health problems including respiratory problems, circulatory problems and an increased risk of poor mental health. Estimates suggest that some 10% of excess winter deaths are directly attributable to fuel poverty and a fifth of excess winter deaths are attributable to the coldest quarter of homes.*
- *Cold homes can also affect wider determinants of health, such as educational performance among children and young people, as well as work absences.*
- *Tackling fuel poverty and cold home-related health problems is important for improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities in health in England. Local authorities and public health are well placed to address issues relating to fuel poverty*

The referring agency in place for domestic energy efficiency grant funding in Slough is Aran Services Ltd who will have access to ECO Flexibility - Help to Heat funding:

The referring agency, Aran Services Ltd , will assess eligibility in line with this statement and will refer households deemed eligible to the council who will then approve and notify Aran Services Ltd to carry out a survey.

In all areas, the final decision on whether any individual household can benefit from energy saving improvements under the government's Affordable Warmth programme will be made by the delivery agent or the utility company's appointed contractor. Inclusion in a Declaration authorised by Slough Borough Council to a supplier will not guarantee installation of measures or fully funded works, as the final decision will depend on:

- a) survey carried out by Aran Services' Ltd Agent/Contractor and installation costs

¹ [Fuel poverty and cold home-related health problems - Gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

- calculated,
- b) the energy savings that can be achieved for a property,,
- c) whether suppliers have achieved their targets or require further measures to meet their ECO targets.

2. DETAILS

2.1 How Slough Borough Council intends to identify eligible households

ECO Flexibility Help to Heat funding is only available to private tenure households. In order to be eligible for this funding, a household must fit one, or more of the following criteria:

- a) Living in fuel poverty, but not in receipt of ECO qualifying benefits ('fuel poverty)
- b) Low income and vulnerability to cold (LIVC)
- c) Solid Wall Insulation (SWI) in-fill

Slough Borough Council will keep these criteria under review, in relation to levels of referrals made, delivery of installed measures and the practices of other authorities.

2.2 Criteria for identifying 'Living in fuel poverty, but not in receipt of benefits'

Fuel poverty is defined as living with low income but high heating costs. Slough Borough Council will assess two elements to determine eligibility:

- a) For the 'low income' portion of this indicator, the referring agency will look to find evidence that a member of the household is in receipt of an ECO qualifying income-related benefit in the first instance. Should the resident not receive any ECO qualifying income-related benefits, then the referring agency will consider a household in receipt of Council Tax Benefit, Housing Benefit, or with an income of less than £30,000 to be 'low income' for the purposes of this criteria.
- b) For the 'high cost' portion of the indicator, the referring agency, Aran Services Ltd , will look to identify eligible households as those that have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of 'E' or lower. These properties will be identified using the Landmark online EPC register. In the event that a property does not meet this criteria, Aran Services Ltd will identify if the property falls into one of these additional categories which have been selected due to their high energy bills, hard to treat and hard to reach nature:
 - Park homes and other permanent caravan residences
 - Privately rented properties including Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
 - Homes which are not heated by mains gas
 - Flats above commercial premises
 - System built properties
 - Sheltered housing for the elderly
 - Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) for example, Central, Britwell & Northborough charley, Colnbrook. Link below provide details of 2015 indices of deprivation.
<http://www.slough.gov.uk/council/joint-strategic-needs-assessment/deprivation.aspx>
 - Homes which require cavity wall insulation
 - Homes with 100mm or less of loft insulation

2.3 Criteria for identifying 'low income and vulnerability to cold' (LIVC)

Slough Borough Council will assess two combined elements to determine eligibility:

- a) The 'low income' portion of this identifier as set out in the previous section for 'fuel poverty'
- b) Vulnerability to cold which will be assessed in conjunction with Adult Social Care or by Aran Services Ltd asking residents to inform them of any health conditions they may suffer from, or whether the household composition may lead to a higher than average vulnerability to cold. This information will highlight risks for people associated with cold homes. The following people will therefore meet this second criteria:

- people with cardiovascular conditions
- people with respiratory conditions (in particular, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and childhood asthma)
- people with mental health conditions
- people with disabilities
- older people (60 and older)
- young children (aged 10 or under)
- pregnant women
- people with addictions
- people who have attended hospital due to a fall
- Terminal illness
- suppressed immune system e.g. from cancer treatment or HIV (inclusion as recommended by Health Booster Fund projects)

Any referral or enquiry received that does not meet the above requirements will be considered by Slough Borough Council on a case by case basis

2.4 Criteria for Solid Wall Insulation (SWI) 'in-fill' Projects

To increase the economies of scale of SWI projects, solid wall homes (ie. no cavity wall) which are not 'fuel poor', will be eligible for Flexible ECO funding, where they are co-located with a minimum percentage of households assessed to be Fuel Poor (FP) or L1VC. The criteria for this will be:

Table 1 Summary of the requirements for different property types under in-fill

Property Type	LA Declaration Requirements	In-fill available
Semi-detached houses or bungalows, or a building containing no more than two domestic premises	At least one of the two-properties must be classified by the LA as FP or L1VC (50% eligibility).	The other property to which it is directly adjoined is eligible for solid wall insulation.
Any other properties that are contained together on a list provided by the LA that are in the same or immediately adjacent buildings.. or in the same terrace (eg flats and terraced houses)	At least 66% of properties listed in the declaration must be classified by the LA as FP or L1VC.	The other 34% of properties on the list are eligible for solid wall insulation, provided they are either in the same building, an immediately adjacent building or In the same terrace.

3. GOVERNANCE

The statement of Intent and the Declaration will be signed by the Interim Director of Place & Development behalf of Slough Borough Council. .

The process for identifying eligible households under "Flexible Flexibility" is as below:

Aran Service's Ltd to assess eligibility in line with ISO and Declaration	Slough Council to review & approve cases and return to Aran services Ltd	Aran Services Ltd to deliver measures as required
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4. MARKETING & REFERRALS

Slough Borough Council will ensure appropriate referral processes are in place and will work with relevant partners to identify potentially eligible people in the most effective way, while maintaining the protection of personal data. This will include initial identification of eligible households using the BRE integrated database Slough Borough Council's recently commissioned. Slough Borough Council's Stock Modelling will be used to identify and prioritise the area with the highest proportion / prevalence of fuel poverty in order to maximise uptake to reduce fuel poverty.

We will also work with Adult Social Care, to determine those that may be vulnerable to living in a cold home, suffering from a qualifying medical condition. All potential eligible households will be contacted and referred to Aran Services Ltd .

5. EVIDENCE, MONITORING AND REPORTING

The referring agency will capture and store all relevant information during the initial enquiry to determine the correct course of action for each household.

The referring agency will inform residents that they may be required to provide evidence of income and medical/health conditions and other information such as any relevant health condition, at a later date in order to deter fraudulent claims.

Slough Borough Council will use its discretion to decide whether any auditing is required to confirm eligibility under this Statement of Intent. If auditing is undertaken, eligibility of claimants will be assessed by a random sample of households on a post-installation basis.

Aran Services Ltd will provide key information, including the number of referrals made and the number of funded installations delivered.

6. SIGNATURE

Name: Mike England

Position: *Director, Place and Development*

Signed *Mike England*

Date: *8 January 2018*